



# Parents as Partners

## Preparing for your Child's IEP Meeting

Every child with a disability who is eligible for exceptional student education (ESE) will have an individual education plan (IEP). An IEP is a written plan for the special education of a child with a disability.

The IEP is like a road map. It describes what the child can already do and what the child needs to learn in order to reach his or her goals.

The IEP also identifies the kind of help the child will be provided.

Your child's IEP will be written by a team of people at an IEP meeting.

The IEP team will decide which special services and supports your child needs in order to make progress.

You are an important member of the IEP team.

The Department of Education has developed a guide that introduces parents to Exceptional Student Education in Florida (<http://www.fl DOE.org/ese/pdf/ese parent.pdf>).

This guide includes information that will help you know what to expect during the IEP meeting, so that you will feel comfortable and be able to participate effectively in the process.

Keep in mind—the IEP is written for your child only. There is only one IEP at a time for your child. The IEP is a plan for up to 12 months of your child's education.



Happy Fall!

## Jan LaBelle Scholarship Program

The application period for the Jan La Belle Scholarship Program opens Saturday, September 15!

Applications must be post-marked by November 15, 2012, to be considered.

The application and requirements are available at [www.fndusa.org/scholarship](http://www.fndusa.org/scholarship)

One or more scholarship winners will be selected for a total possible non-renewable award of up to \$15,000. Award amounts are based on several factors, including available funds and number of

eligible applicants.

Applicant must be an individual with a disability, be a Florida resident and be 16-24 years of age who is entering as a first time student at any institution of higher learning.

St. Johns County School District ESE Dept.

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### Gifted Parent Advisory Dates

10/16—The Webster School

1/8—Durbin Creek Elementary School

3/19—Ocean Palms Elementary School

5/13—Julington Creek Elementary School

All meetings are from 3:30-4:30

# Creekside Shining Knights



Creekside High School is proud to announce it's very first Shining Knights cheerleading team. The Shining Knights are a part of the Sparkle Effect's national organization for fully inclusive cheerleaders, both male and female. This innovative student-run program empowers teens nationwide to include students with disabilities in school-based cheerleading and dance programs. Sparkle Effect teams are truly inclusive: typically-developing students and students with disabilities practice and perform as one team at school sporting events.

Our Shining Knights team was the idea of Taylor Godfrey, the varsity cheerleading captain at Creekside High School. Taylor approached Leigh Ann Moss, a self-contained ESE teacher at Creekside about the idea last school year after learning about another local high school using some of our students to cheer for their school. Taylor couldn't imagine that continuing since we actually had a perfect program and opportunity to use right here at Creekside! The idea was approved by our athletic director, Guy Harris and principal, Randy Johnson. Jamie Godfrey, the varsity cheerleading coach (and Taylor's mom!) has been an integral part of the program and helps to organize the varsity cheerleaders and has outfitted the team with amazing uniforms! The students and Taylor, along with two varsity football players, Cody Etze and Mitch Renda, practice on Wednesdays and Fridays in Leigh Ann's classroom during 6<sup>th</sup> period. It goes without fail that other teachers, students, and administrators come into the classroom to watch their Knights shine!

During every home football game, you will see the Shining Knights cheering for their team. The first quarter of every home football game is spent showing off their Creekside spirit and talents. Students with disabilities are paired with a member of the varsity cheerleading team during home games for an unforgettable learning and bonding experience. The unbelievable support of Creekside's faculty, staff, and students has helped make the dream of the self-contained ESE students being more a part of the school come true.

The Shining Knights were chosen as the News4Jax Team of the Week!

Visit <http://www.news4jax.com/sports/team-of-the-week/Creekside-Shining-Knights/-/16411754/16581834/-/5d0cyh/-/index.html> to check out the segment.

Please come support our Creekside Knights and Shining Knights during any home football game for a chance to get a little bit "R-O-W-D-Y"!

## GO KNIGHTS!

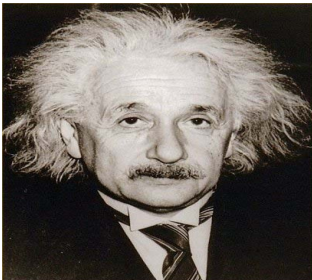
## Disability History and Awareness Weeks

The first two weeks of October are Disability History and Awareness Weeks! [Section 1003.4205](#), Florida Statutes, entitled *Disability History and Awareness Instruction*, was signed into law in 2008. It requires school districts to designate the first two weeks of October as Disability History and Awareness Weeks and also promotes providing instruction for students in all public schools to expand student knowledge, understanding, and awareness of individuals with disabilities, disability history and the disability rights movement.

Florida started the first special education class in 1926 in Jacksonville. Since 1926, specially designed instruction and related services have expanded throughout Florida. Now, approximately 375,000 students identified with disabilities are participating in Florida's public education system and are graduating and going on to postsecondary education or employment.

We are proud to participate in promoting awareness of disability history and the contributions of individuals with disabilities and to designate the first two weeks in October of every year as Disability History and Awareness.

Florida Department of Education-Exceptional Education and Student Services. *Disability History and Awareness: A Resource Guide*. Retrieved from <http://www.fldoe.org/ese/history.asp>



**Albert Einstein** - (1879 - 1955) Being one of the most important great minds of his century, Albert Einstein was then known to suffer from dyslexia (mainly because of his bad memory and his constant failure to memorize the simplest of things). He would not remember the months in the year, yet he would succeed in solving some of the most complicated mathematical formulas of the time without any trouble. He may have never learned how to properly tie his shoelaces, but his scientific contributions and theories still have a major effect on all of today's current knowledge of science.

### ESE Parent Advisory Committee Meeting

40 Orange Street—3rd Floor Auditorium

September 27, 2012

February 28, 2013

6:00 pm—8:00 pm

The purpose of the Parent Advisory Committee is to identify barriers experienced by exceptional students and their families. This information is then shared with those who can effect changes (administration at schools and exceptional student education staff at the district level). A copy is also provided to those who attend the meeting. If you need special accommodations, please contact Nancy Morrison (547-7672) one week prior to the meeting. The District contact for the Parent Advisory Committee is George Freeman (547-7704).

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**Exceptional Student Education Department**

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***Mission Statement: To identify and meet the unique educational needs of exceptional students and to provide support and resources to enhance educational opportunities so they may become productive citizens.***

ESE programs and services address the unique needs of students who are gifted in kindergarten through 12th grade and those with mild, moderate and severe disabilities from age three until they graduate with a regular diploma or through their 21st birthday. ESE programs and services are designed to assist students in reaching their educational goals through the use of instructional and behavioral approaches which are research-based and exemplify best practices. Technology is used in many creative ways to meet student needs as well.

ESE services are available at all district schools for students who have mild to moderate disabilities. Gifted students and students with more significant disabilities are served in cluster programs at selected sites. Program support is provided to students, parents and school personnel by program specialists based at the district office. Students with disabilities who are not eligible for services through the ESE program, may be eligible for an accommodations plan under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

**WOULD YOU LIKE TO RECEIVE THIS NEWSLETTER ELECTRONICALLY?**

We hope that you find this newsletter informative and useful. The next issue of the Parents as Partners Newsletter will be posted to the St. Johns County School District web site at [www.stjohns.k12.fl.us](http://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us).

Follow the link under Departments/Academic Services/Accountability and Intervention Services; then click on Exceptional Student Education (on the left); you will find the newsletter. If you would like to receive a copy via email, please email your email address to [bullarj@stjohns.k12fl.us](mailto:bullarj@stjohns.k12fl.us) and we will gladly add you to our Parent Newsletter Email List.